CARPENTARIA SHIRE
Outback by the Sea ®

Governance Framework

October 2023

*It's a great place to work,
live and play*

www.carpentaria.qld.gov.au

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Carpentaria Shire Council would like to respectfully acknowledge the Gkuthaarn, Kukatj and Kurtijar peoples as the traditional owners of the lands and waters that form the Region. Council pays its respect to elders' past, present and emerging and welcomes the ongoing role that indigenous people play within the Carpentaria community.

Contents

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This Governance Framework has been developed by the Carpentaria Shire Council to ensure compliance with legislation and best practice democratic local government.

What is Governance

Governance within Australian Local Government usually refers to accountability for organisational decision making and behaviour:

> *Governance is the process by which decisions are taken and implemented; the process by which organisations go about achieving their goals and producing their outputs and the process by which organisations are directed, controlled and held to account. It encompasses authority, accountability, stewardship, leadership, values and culture within the organisation.*

Corporate Governance is widely recognised as providing the framework and tools required to ensure that organisations are progressive and can operate in an effective and accountable manner.

From a Local Government perspective, the framework reinforces the statutory authority and responsibilities of Council as a corporate body and assists elected representatives and professional officers in the delivery of quality services. Central to the achievement of these outcomes is the engagement of key stakeholders and intended beneficiaries in the development and implementation of initiatives for the betterment of local communities.

Effective corporate governance is not possible without a recognition and acceptance of legislative and administrative instruments that clearly establish the roles and responsibilities of the corporate body, elected membership, and professional officers. Within this context, the governance framework will be enhanced through the adoption of a clearly defined, transparent decision-making process and delegation instruments which best meet the strategic and operational needs of the region.

Effective outcomes are best achieved where the role and focus of elected members as a collective corporate organisation, is directed to policy formulation and strategic development. The role of the staff is to implement the policies and strategies of the corporate body through an accountable, effective, and efficient application of resources and assets.

About this Framework

Carpentaria Shire Council Governance Framework ("the framework") is based upon best practice for public sector governance. The framework sets out the standards of accountability and transparency expected of government by our many stakeholders and the people of Queensland. The overall aim of the framework is to drive performance improvement while meeting our obligations and legislative requirements.

The framework outlines the principles, elements and mechanisms used by Council to support a focus upon effective governance through strong leadership, responsible and ethical decision-making, management and accountability, and performance improvement.

Corporate governance arrangements must continually evolve to ensure that organisational and service delivery objectives are met effectively, efficiently, and transparently. Accordingly, the framework will be reviewed annually, or as required to support change to Council's strategic priorities or major legislative realignment. However, the fundamental principles of good governance outlined in this framework will be maintained.

As local government employees, we have a duty to carry out our activities according to required practice. This framework should be used to assess the strengths and weaknesses of current practice and improve it so that our stakeholders have ongoing confidence in Council's commitment to deliver its services responsibly.

Values

The framework is underpinned by the five values of Council:

Community	**Service provided for the community, for it is why we are here**
Respect	**We respect one another's views, not all of us have the same view and we respect that**
Integrity	**We always act with integrity**
Safety First	**Safety is for everyone, staff, residents, visitors and the general community**
Professionalism	**We remain professional in all that we do**

Implementation and Review

To ensure compliance and best practice governance, Council will conduct an annual review of the Governance Framework to ensure continuous improvement of corporate governance in the organisation.

The review will ensure the accuracy of the document in line with changing legislation and organisational responsibilities. A series of quantitative and qualitative performance measures have been defined to measure Council's effectiveness in implementing the Framework. An assessment of performance against these measures will be conducted annually.

ANNUAL CYCLE	ACTIVITY
April	Evaluation of Governance Framework performance measures
April	Review and revision of the document by internal stakeholders
June	Approval of revised document and any recommended actions by the Executive Management Team
June	Distribution of the updated Governance Framework

1. TRANSPARENT AND EFFECTIVE PROCESSES, AND DECISION-MAKING IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

1.1 Decision Making

1.1.1 The Role of Local Government

Council is responsible for providing transparent and accountable local government to the Carpentaria Shire community. Local government in Queensland is established under the *Local Government Act 2009* ("the Act"). Section 8 of the Act states that a local government is an elected body that is responsible for the good rule and local government of a part of Queensland (known as the local government area).

Local governments have legislative responsibility for many functions and activities that are relevant to local communities. As the level of government often seen as 'closest' to the community, local government activities relate to matters that are fundamental to people's lives and impact strongly on their quality of life.

The Act gives Council flexibility in making decisions and delivering services, without intervention by the state government or the minister responsible for local government.

1.1.2 Councillors – Portfolio System

The Carpentaria Shire Council comprises of seven (7) Councillors including the Mayor. The Mayor and Councillors are elected by popular vote across the Region. Local Government elections are conducted every four years on a fixed date prescribed by the State Government, with Councillors elected for a term of four years.

Council has agreed to the establishment of a portfolio system as part of its corporate decision-making structure. This system provides for nominated Councillors to be assigned specific responsibilities for a key strategic focus area of Council. The portfolio system provides no formal delegated authority to the portfolio Councillor. It provides, however, the Councillor with an opportunity to develop and maintain a heightened level of knowledge and leadership across the Council area in a specified field.

The portfolio system serves as a means of establishing focused and meaningful connections between Council and the community, providing the opportunity for joint strategic collaboration and greater representation of community priorities.

1.1.3 Council Meeting Cycle

The Ordinary Meetings of the Carpentaria Shire Council are held on the 3rd Wednesday and Thursday of each month commencing at 9:00am and 8:30am respectively.

The meetings are generally held in the Carpentaria Shire Council Chamber located at the Administration Building 29-33 Haig Street, Normanton, with the exception of two meeting which are held in Karumba throughout the year.

Whilst members of the public are welcome to attend these meetings, they must be excluded during deliberations of confidential items in the "Closed" section of the agenda.

From time-to-time Special Meetings of Council are called. Any changes to meeting dates and/or times are notified in accordance with legislative requirements.

Minutes of Council meetings are available once they have been confirmed. Agendas for Council meetings are available online from 48 hours prior to the General Meeting.

1.1.4 Advisory Committees

Council operates advisory groups responsible for providing recommendations on the management of key community assets and facilities, events, and other matters that the Council seeks further engagement. Advisory groups comprising community and stakeholder representatives and resourced by Council's technical and administrative staff have also been established to progress key strategic projects.

As part of Council's aim of maintaining ongoing, effective community participation in decision making, consultative committees are also established on an 'as needs' basis to facilitate input and feedback in the development of major proposals and initiatives.

Advisory Committee
Audit and Risk Committee – Full Council (not a separate committee)

1.1.5 Strategic Planning Framework

Council's Strategic Planning Framework is the overarching framework used to assist Council and the community to plan for the future. It is a continuous, systematic process for engaging the community to identify intended future outcomes, monitor how outcomes are being achieved and report how success will be measured. The Strategic Planning Framework ensures that efficiencies are achieved through coordinated planning and budgeting and that systems and arrangements are undertaken in an integrated manner to inform a well-considered asset, capital, and financial strategic direction for Council.

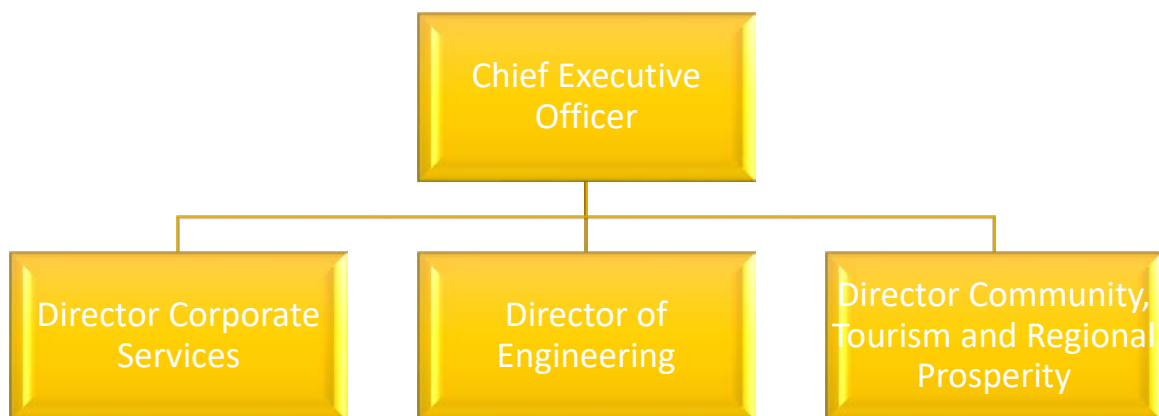The Strategic Planning Framework comprises a hierarchy of cascading and interconnecting documents, which when taken together allows Council to turn its long-term aspirations, goals and plans into reality. It assists in planning for a sustainable future for Council, the community, the environment, and the economy. It also ensures methodologies are in place for measuring performance against desired outcomes.

1.2   Management Structure

1.2.1 Organisational Structure

The Chief Executive Officer and Executive Management Team partner with staff and Councillors to deliver expected outcomes to the community. The following diagram illustrates the structure and interrelationship between the community and key stakeholders with the internal organisation.

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                    ┌──────────────────────┐
                    │   Chief Executive    │
                    │      Officer         │
                    └──────────┬───────────┘
          ┌────────────────────┼────────────────────┐
┌─────────────────┐  ┌─────────────────┐  ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Director Corporate│  │  Director of    │  │ Director Community,  │
│    Services      │  │  Engineering    │  │ Tourism and Regional │
│                  │  │                 │  │     Prosperity       │
└─────────────────┘  └─────────────────┘  └──────────────────────┘
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Council's organisational structure is designed to support the achievement of Council's vision and key plans. Reviews of the organisational structure ensure the optimal deployment of resources to deliver identified corporate priorities. Proposals for organisational structure changes are approved by the Chief Executive Officer prior to consideration and approval by Council.

1.2.2 Executive Leadership Team

Council's Executive Leadership Team comprises of the Chief Executive Officer and three directors.

The Executive Leadership Team meets fortnightly to ensure effective coordination of the region's operations and implementation of Council resolutions.

These meetings are complemented by the regular Leadership Team meetings. Such forums are considered important, both in enabling management information dissemination and feedback by staff, thereby promoting a whole of organisation approach for the region in the fulfilment of its functions and responsibilities. This is done through monthly meetings of the Senior Leadership Team – consisting of the Managers from across the three directorates.

2. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF ASSETS AND INFRASTRUCTURE, AND DELIVERY OF EFFECTIVE SERVICES

2.1 Planning

2.1.1 Planning Scheme - 2008

In accordance with the *Integrated Planning Act 1997*, the local government for the Carpentaria Shire has prepared a planning scheme as a framework for managing development in a way that advances the purpose of the *Integrated Planning Act 1997* by:

a) identifying assessable and self-assessable development; and
b) identifying outcomes sought to be achieved in the local government area as the context for assessing development.

The Planning Scheme (2008) is available via Council's website at the following link: - https://www.carpentaria.qld.gov.au/development-and-planning/planning

2.1.2 Long Term Financial Planning

Council's long-term financial strategy and financial plan support the implementation of Council's comprehensive future programs. Long-term financial planning is an essential governance tool, which supports:

- Fiscal responsibility and financial sustainability;
- transparency and accountability to the local community and other stakeholders;
- appropriate levels of inter-generational equity;
- the delivery of reporting against financial targets and goals;
- the capacity of managers to effectively plan and deliver their services;
- the development of performance measures (qualitative and quantitative) and target service levels; and
- the development of Council's annual budget.

Section 169 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012 r*equires that the long-term financial forecast must cover a period of at least 10 years and include the relevant financial sustainability ratios, including:

- asset sustainability ratio;
- net financial liabilities ratio; and
- operating surplus ratio.

Council is in the process of developing and testing the Queensland Treasury Corporation Financial Forecasting Model for use as a consistent and comprehensive platform for financial forecasting and data analysis for Council.

2.1.3 Asset Management Plans

Asset management planning is an essential tool for the long-term provision of asset-based services to the community. The *Local Government Regulation 2012* requires that Council prepare and adopt a long-term Asset Management Plan ("the plan") covering a period of at least 10 years. The plan must provide strategies to ensure the sustainable management of Council's infrastructure and the assets mentioned in Council's asset register. It must also state the estimated capital expenditure for renewing, upgrading, and extending the assets for the period covered by the plan and be consistent with Council's Long-Term Financial Management Plan.

Council's Long-Term Asset Management documentation supports the Corporate Plan and informs the Long-Term Financial Management Plan by providing financial projections for asset capital investment (i.e., renewal and new and upgrade works) and asset operational and maintenance costs for Council's current and future asset portfolio.

2.1.4 Economic Development Strategy

As a remote area, Carpentaria has its fair share of disadvantages but it's far from being doom and gloom. The fact that we get rain every year is one of the reasons the gulf country makes such good breeding country for cattle. It's another reason we have such a productive fishery. The wetlands, open forest and rolling plains also make us a tourist destination worth visiting and exploring. There is far more to experience in the Gulf than just our great fishing.

Shrinking, and an ageing population is one of our biggest challenges which is due to losing our youth to the cities and the reluctance of financial institutions to recognise our area as a land of opportunity. For a person young or old wanting to start a business or build a home the required 40-60% deposit is totally prohibitive and unfair.

Connectivity as in internet, roads and air services are forever on Council's agenda when talking in government circles. We always get a fair hearing but the "postcode red flag" scenario with banks and insurance companies is an issue that is affecting resale of businesses and the development of new business in our region.

To grow our local economy together we identified tourism, agriculture, fishing and small business as our key industries.

There are opportunities for us to build on our tourism profile and promote the wonderful tourism products that our visitors know and love. We can also explore new tourism product ideas along with further growth for our beef cattle and fishing industries. Growth in these industries will address some of our challenges such as retaining population, attracting much needed skills and support the provision of adequate housing. Greater support for the small businesses in our Shire to embrace new technologies has the potential to build the capacity of businesses and attract new opportunities. While our Shire is normally well connected via road, and air services, the seasonal monsoon events can impact on access to the region with extended high rainfall closing road access. Residents of our Shire enjoy a relaxed lifestyle which is a factor that attracts visitors to our shire.

The Economic Development Strategy is available for inspection on Council's website at the following link: - https://www.carpentaria.qld.gov.au/development-and-planning/economic-development-strategy

2.1.5 Procurement/Purchasing Policy

Council maintains a *Procurement Policy* to ensure transparency and accountability in the procurement of all goods and services in line with Section 198 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*. The Procurement Policy sets out the approved processes and methods for purchasing goods and services within Council.

All Council procurement must be conducted in strict compliance with Section 104 of the *Local Government Act 2009*, including the sound contracting principles as follows:

- Value for Money
- Open and Effective Competition
- The Development of Competitive Local Business and Industry
- Environmental Protection
- Ethical Behaviour and Fair Dealing

2.1.6 Annual Budget

The Annual Budget supports the delivery of the annual Operational Plan and is consistent with the priorities identified in Council's key plans. The Budget identifies the initiatives funded for the coming year and is presented to Council at the Annual Budget Meeting together with a report setting out the financial operations and financial position of Council for the previous financial year. Council's Budget must include statements of Council's financial position, cash flow, income and expenditure and changes in equity and is accompanied by a suite of associated policies including the Debt, Investment, Procurement and Revenue Policies.

The Annual Budget is available for inspection on Council's website at the following link: - https://www.carpentaria.qld.gov.au/council/publications/budget

2.1.7 Project Management

Council's Project Management Framework was developed to assist all staff involved in the management or delivery of projects, to undertake project management effectively and efficiently. The Framework is tailored to Council's project management needs and supports the consistent application of sound project management to the wide range of projects in Council's portfolio of capital and operational programs.

The Framework explains the key project management concepts and the importance of project management in Council's annual business cycle and its project and product lifecycle. It specifically provides the following benefits:

- The consistent application of project management practice by all of the departments within Council
- The effective integration of relevant departments' needs in the early phases of a project
- The effective transfer and sharing of information between departments at the end of project delivery
- An increased project management capability and capacity within Council
- The promotion and support of the continuous improvement of project management understanding and capability within Council.

3. DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION, SOCIAL INCLUSION AND MEANINGFUL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

3.1 Engagement and communication with the Community

3.1.1 Community Engagement

Council is committed to ensuring inclusive and effective community engagement.

Council believes that fostering democratic representation, social inclusion and meaningful community engagement greatly assists in the delivery of high-quality local government. Council releases a monthly community newsletter to advise the community of matters of community and council interest.

In recent years the Council has commenced Community Meetings to hear directly from members of the community on issues and matters that matter most to them. Copies of the issues and matters raised are captured and reported back through the Council website.

From time to time the Council will request input and consultation from the community on a variety of matters and this is usually compiled via the Council website through the "Have Your Say" section.

Fostering a Council-wide culture of community engagement.

The Community Consultation Meeting information is available for inspection via Council's website https://www.carpentaria.qld.gov.au/community-consultation

3.1.2 Media Relations

Media relations is an important component in achieving Council's mission and goals through effectively informing, educating, and promoting Council's programs, services, and facilities to residents. Council is committed to maintaining a professional, informative, and courteous relationship with all levels of the media.

The *Social Media Policy* sets out the standards of behaviour expected of persons when referring to Council on social media platforms, including social networking sites when the person is using a computer or hand-held device not owned or controlled by Council. This policy also deals with acceptable use of the social media platforms during ordinary work hours.

4. GOOD GOVERNANCE OF, AND BY, LOCAL GOVERNMENT

4.1 Planning

4.1.1 Planning Framework

Regional Development Australia is an Australian Government initiative that brings together all levels of government to enhance the growth and development of Australia's regions through the development of Regional Roadmaps.

The Carpentaria Shire Council Local Government Area sits within the Townsville and North West Queensland Regional Roadmap. This Region accounts for one quarter of Queensland's land mass, has a population of approximately 262,000 and represents 5.9% of Queensland's population. The 15 Local Government areas included in the region are Boulia, Burdekin, Burke, Carpentaria, Mount Isa, Cloncurry, Doomadgee, Flinders, Hinchinbrook, McKinlay, Mornington Island, Charters Towers, Palm Island, Richmond and Townsville.

Townsville and North West Queensland Regional Roadmap vision:

> *By 2031 the Region will have a robust, sustainable economy; caring and inclusive communities that embrace all cultures; a great lifestyle that attracts and retains people; a distinctive and well recognised identity and an environment and natural assets that are valued and well managed.*

The full Roadmap, including the committee members and Mount Isa's responsibilities, can be found on the Regional Development Australia Townsville and North West Queensland website.

4.1.2 Planning Scheme

In accordance with the *Integrated Planning Act 1997*, the local government for the Carpentaria Shire has prepared this planning scheme as a framework for managing development in a way that advances the purpose of the *Integrated Planning Act 1997* by:

c) identifying assessable and self-assessable development; and
d) identifying outcomes sought to be achieved in the local government area as the context for assessing development.

You can download the current Carpentaria Planning Scheme 2008. Please be aware that this document download (PDF) is 1.18mb and Maps 12.16mb in size.

The current Planning Scheme is now nearly several years old. The new Scheme will reflect current legislative requirements and is being drafted in accordance with the Queensland Planning Provisions. The new Scheme, currently out for public consultation, will ensure that Carpentaria Shire grows in a sustainable manner, and that development in Carpentaria Shire is completed to a high standard.

Council's Planning Team is currently preparing the draft Planning Scheme with the assistance of Jennifer Roughan. The first draft of the new Scheme has been submitted to the Department of State Development Infrastructure and Planning for the required State Interest check.

The Scheme is now publicly notified, and members of the community have an opportunity to comment and provide submissions. Regular updates on the progress of the new Planning Scheme will be provided on this website.

4.1.3   Corporate Plan

The Corporate Plan is a five-year plan and a detailed road map for the Region, which identifies the projects, operations, and services which Council will implement during the life of the Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan, in conjunction with the Strategic Financial Plan, will set Council's resource and budgeting priorities for the life of the Corporate Plan. Councillors are provided with an annual update on the Corporate Plan.

Council's Corporate Plan defines the outcome measures that it will use to demonstrate progress towards achieving the vision outlined in the Long-Term Plan. These measures are reported against through Council's Annual Report.

Council's Corporate Plan is available for inspection on Council's website https://www.carpentaria.qld.gov.au/council/publications/corporate-plan and at the Normanton Administration Building and the Karumba Library.

4.1.4   Operational Plan

The Operational Plan links Council's strategic directions (set out in the Corporate Plan) to the projects, initiatives and ongoing activities to be delivered for a particular financial year, and funded through Council's annual budget. The plan is comprised of a number of key activities and outputs which Council is committed to delivering over a financial year. Council is required to report quarterly on the progress of all operational activities to ensure financial responsibility and the sustainability of our Region and community assets.

Progress on the implementation of the Operational Plan is measured using a suite of performance measures and reported quarterly through the Corporate Performance Report, by the Chief Executive Officer to Council.

Council's Operational Plan is available for inspection on Council's website https://www.carpentaria.qld.gov.au/homepage/40/annual-operational-plan .

Strategic Alignment

Corporate Plan → Operational Plan → Long Term Financial Plan → Annual Report

4.2 Performance and Reporting

4.2.1 Annual Report

Council is required to produce and adopt an Annual Report within one month after the day the Auditor- General's report on the Annual Financial Statements is provided. The Annual Report is one of council's key planning and accountability documents. It provides a comprehensive assessment of council's performance in implementing the 5-year Corporate Plan and annual Operational Plan. The Annual Report is also one of the only documents that provide a report on Council's financial performance throughout the preceding financial year.

The Report provides council with a tool to market achievements to potential investors and city partners and demonstrates to stakeholders that Council has delivered its committed outcomes.

The Annual Report is available for inspection on Council's website https://www.carpentaria.qld.gov.au/homepage/41/annual-report and at the Normanton Administration Building and the Karumba Library. Copies are provided to the Minister for Local Government, local members of parliament and other city leaders.

4.2.2 Annual Returns

The Local Government Comparative Reports program requires councils to provide information on specific areas such as financial, personnel, road lengths etc, water services and charges, sewerage services and charges, waste management, library services and parks and gardens and is delivered through annual returns submitted to the Department of Local Government and Planning.

The Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning collates the returns state-wide and publishes results on its website, available at the following

link https://www.statedevelopment.qld.gov.au/local-government/for-councils/resources/local-government-comparative-reports

4.2.3 Annual Financial Statements

Council's general-purpose financial statements are prepared pursuant to Section 176 of the Local Government Regulation 2012 and other prescribed requirements. The statements must accurately reflect council's financial performance and position for the financial year, must be prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, must present a true and fair view of Council's financial position and of its financial performance and cash flows for the financial year ended on that date.

The financial Statements are included in Council's Annual Report, which is available for inspection via Council's website https://www.carpentaria.qld.gov.au/homepage/41/annual-report, Normanton Administration Building or the Karumba Library.

4.2.4 Community Financial Report

The Community Financial Report is a summary of the information contained in council's financial statements and is intended to provide an overview of council's financial position in an easily understood format.

The financial Statements are included in the Annual Report, which is available for inspection via Council's website, Normanton Administration Building or the Karumba Library.

4.2.5 Quarterly Corporate Performance Reports

Section 174 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* requires the Chief Executive Officer to present a written assessment of the local government's progress towards implementing the annual Operational Plan at meetings of the local government held at regular intervals of not more than three months.

Council meets this requirement through the preparation of a Quarterly Corporate Performance Report, which provides substantive evidence for council and the community of progress in delivering on the annual Operational Plan each quarter. Progress against each operational planning activity is measured using key performance indicators and provides the basis for an annual assessment of progress towards meeting the goals and strategies outlined in the Corporate Plan.

Council's quarterly Corporate Performance Reports are available for inspection on Council's website https://www.carpentaria.qld.gov.au/homepage/40/annual-operational-plan

4.3   Risk Management

4.3.1   Enterprise-Wide Risk Management

Carpentaria Shire Council is part of the insurance schemes Local Government Mutual (LGM) & Local Government Workcare (LGW) through Jardine Lloyd Thomson (JLT). JLT have engaged Regional Risk Coordinators (RRC) to work with Councils to implement Enterprise Risk Management Framework's.

The risk management framework is based on Risk Management Standard AS/NZS ISO 31000-2009. The work of the RRC will support the change management process by identifying and minimising potential adverse risks that may impact on Council.

Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) is a sound management process for helping Councils to achieve the strategies and objectives outlined in their Corporate Plan, thus providing the following benefits:-

1. Lower insurance costs and claims. Councils with a robust risk management culture and framework assist with the mitigation of risk and are seen in a positive light by insurers. The successful development and implementation of risk mitigation will therefore have a flow on positive effect on insurable risks e.g., Liability, Professional Indemnity and WorkCover, and potentially reduce annual contribution levels;
2. Reduced likelihood of reputation damage caused by unexpected surprises;
3. Compliance with the *Local Government Act 2009*;
4. Compliance with Qld Audit Office requirement to have processes and controls in place for managing and monitoring financial and other types of risks;
5. Minimises the possibility of legal action against CEO's and Executives, as this is becoming more common. The establishment of a risk management framework and subsequent documented processes is accepted by Courts of Law as evidence of good governance. Having consistent policies and procedures in place, and part of Council's culture will assist in defending Council's position and reputation;
6. Provides a formal structure around which Councils can take advantage of new opportunities as they arise, especially if cost savings are made on other areas;
7. Contributes to positive cultural change within Council, whereby staff at every level are both aware of, and proactive in practicing Risk Management as part of their daily jobs.

The rollout of the Enterprise Risk Management Framework will take place through the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and overseen by the Audit Committee.

The suggested format is as follows:-

1. Conduct a series of interviews with CEO, Directors and Managers;
2. Conduct combined ERM Awareness Sessions for Councillors, CEO and ELT;
3. Conduct strategy workshop with CEO and ELT to develop a *Risk Management Policy* and guidelines;
4. Information sessions for Audit Committee;
5. Conduct workshops for Managers or Supervisors;
6. Develop Risk Awareness training for all staff.

4.3.2 Disaster and Recovery Management

In accordance with the *Disaster Management Act 2003* and other relevant legislation, regulations and standards identified in the *State Disaster Management Group Strategic Policy Framework*, Council's disaster management function serves to increase the resilience of the Carpentaria Shire Region in the event of a significant emergency or disaster within the local government area.

Effective coordination of disaster response involves the implementation of all relevant plans, processes, and procedures, together with the timely activation of the Carpentaria Shire Local Disaster Management Group and Council's Disaster Co-ordination Centre. The primary aim of the Carpentaria Shire Local Disaster Management Group is to ensure that the community can return to normal functioning as quickly as possible following a disaster event. This involves ensuring that critical infrastructure and essential services are restored as soon as possible, providing longer-term psycho-social support and welfare to those in need, minimising and redressing environmental impacts and facilitating recovery of the business sector.

The Local Disaster Management Group Plans are available for inspection via Council's website https://www.carpentaria.qld.gov.au/community/disaster-emergency/disaster-management-plan

4.4 Knowledge Management

4.4.1 5 Year IT Strategy

The 5 Year IT Strategy was developed in June 2021.

The ICT Strategy sets the direction for ICT at Carpentaria Shire Council (CSC) and underpins the Corporate plan. The Corporate Plan (2021-2025) refers to various strategic planning documents (e.g., Asset Management Plan, Long Term Financial Sustainability Plan, Workforce Strategy, Culture Plan), and while some of these documents are still to be developed, their effectiveness will be limited without the support of a governed ICT environment with a clear direction.

The document defines an ICT strategy by outlining Council's ICT vision, the operating principles that govern ICT planning and implementation, the focus areas for the next 5 years, the objectives to be achieved across each focus area, and the key actions required to meet those objectives. These are further expanded by a set of expected outcomes and success indicators so Council can measure progress against the strategy.

The strategy is accompanied by a high-level 5-year roadmap that outlines the sequence of activities required to meet the objectives across the defined focus areas.

The strategic objectives for CSC to achieve across the three phases are as follows:

Foundation
- Maximum usage and better control of technology
- Functional alignment of systems to business areas
- Data quality to improve decision making, staff productivity, and reduce compliance risk
- Value for money in vendor contracts.

Consolidation
- Streamlined technology with reliable connectivity
- Reduced duplication of functionality across systems
- Integrated and tightened security and access control
- Standardised interfaces for better user experience.

Transformation
- Self-service for customers
- Efficiency in energy and resource usage
- Innovative infrastructure projects are being established.
- Financial viability is determined for future projects.

4.4.2 Records Management Policy and Procedures

Council is committed to ensuring all records retained are complete and accurate and can be identified, accessed, and retrieved in a useable format that preserves the record's evidential integrity. Council's *Records Management Policy* provides guidance to staff to ensure mandatory compliance with the *Public Records Act 2002* and the principles of IS40 - Recordkeeping and IS31 – Retention and Disposal of Public Records.

4.4.3 Right to Information and Information Privacy

On 1 July 2009 the *Right to Information Act 2009* (RTI Act) and the *Information Privacy Act 2009* (IP Act), replaced the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*.

These laws:

- make more information held by the Government available
- provide equal access to it across all sectors of the community
- provide appropriate protection for individuals' privacy.

The Queensland Government has introduced the Information Privacy Act 2009 (the Act) which applies to the Queensland public sector. The Act contains a number of privacy principles which set out how agencies may and must handle personal information (including the collection, security, use and disclosure of such information). Personal information means any information from which your identity is apparent or can reasonably be ascertained.

If you have any queries about our privacy and security practices please contact council

Further information about Whole of Government policy and the relevant legislation is available from the Right to Information website https://www.rti.qld.gov.au/

Council's Information Privacy Statement is available for inspection via Council's website https://www.carpentaria.qld.gov.au/privacy/website-privacy-security-statement

4.5   Legal Framework

4.5.1 Policies and Procedures

Council maintains several policies, administrative directives and procedures which provide guidance to the organisations decisions and actions.

Corporate policies are statements, formally adopted by Council that describes Council's position on a particular issue. All corporate policies are consistent with Council's long, medium- and short-term planning outcomes and some will directly support the delivery of Council's Corporate Plans. Policies provide guidance for future action by clearly stating the objectives, scope, and responsibilities for policy implementation. Administrative directives describe what the Chief Executive Officer (acting under s.257 of the *Local Government Act 2009*) considers to be appropriate in relation to specific issues arising out of either legislation or Council decisions. They generally relate to the implementation of the day-to-day operations of Council. Administrative directives are considered by the Directors at the Executive Management Team meeting and approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

Procedures assist in the implementation of Council policies or administrative directives. A procedure may establish a set of steps to be undertaken in implementing a policy. Such procedures describe how decisions or actions must be undertaken. Procedures do not have to be approved by the Chief Executive Officer or adopted by Council; however Directors or Managers of the responsible department may refer a procedure to the Chief Executive Officer.

All approved policies are included in a policy register and copies of the Statutory and Strategic policies are available for public inspection on request. All policies have review dates and are reviewed and evaluated in accordance with a schedule, ensuring that corporate policies are up-to date, accurate and continuing to achieve their objectives. There is a formal procedure for reviewing, amending, and rescinding policies. A policy report is presented to the Audit Committee on a quarterly basis.

4.5.2 Local Laws

Local laws are statutory instruments adopted by Council to assist in the good rule and government of the local government area, enabling Council to regulate matters to serve the community. Council's local laws closely follow the models recommended by the Queensland Government.

Local   Laws   are   available   for   inspection   via   Council's   website https://www.carpentaria.qld.gov.au/services/local-laws

4.5.3 Delegations and Delegations Registers

Under Sections 257-260 of the *Local Government Act 2009*, Council can delegate authority to the Mayor, Chief Executive Officer, a Standing Committee, a Committee Chair, another Local Government. In turn, the Mayor can delegate to another Councillor (however, the Mayor must not delegate the power to give directions to the chief executive officer) and the Chief Executive Officer can delegate authority to an appropriately qualified staff member or contractor. However, the Chief Executive Officer must not delegate a power delegated by the local government, if the local government has directed the Chief Executive Officer not to further delegate the power or a power to keep a register of interests.

The Act requires the Chief Executive Officer to establish a register of delegations which must record all delegations by Council, Mayor or the Chief Executive Officer. The Local Government Association Queensland has developed a register following a comprehensive review of State legislation impacting on Local Government.

This Delegations Register covers all possible delegations from Council to Chief Executive Officer, and from Chief Executive Officer to employees or contractors. Council has utilised this service in the development and maintenance of its Register of Delegations.

A Register of Delegations is maintained by Corporate Governance and is available for inspection on request.

5. ETHICAL AND LEGAL BEHAVIOUR OF COUNCILLORS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

5.1 Roles and Responsibilities

5.1.1 Councillors

All Councillors have the following responsibilities.

12 Responsibilities of councillors
1) A councillor must represent the current and future interests of the residents of the local government area.
2) All councillors of a local government have the same responsibilities, but the mayor has some extra responsibilities.
3) All councillors have the following responsibilities—
   a) ensuring the local government—
      i. discharges its responsibilities under this Act; and
      ii. achieves its corporate plan; and
      iii. complies with all laws that apply to local governments;
   b) providing high quality leadership to the local government and the community;
   c) participating in council meetings, policy development, and decision-making, for the benefit of the local government area;
   d) being accountable to the community for the local government's performance.

5.1.2 Mayor

In addition to the responsibilities of all Councillors,

4) The mayor has the following extra responsibilities—
   a) leading and managing meetings of the local government at which the mayor is the chairperson, including managing the conduct of the participants at the meetings;
   b) leading, managing, and providing strategic direction to, the chief executive officer in order to achieve the high quality administration of the local government;
   c) directing the chief executive officer of the local government under section 170;
   d) conducting a performance appraisal of the chief executive officer, at least annually, in the way that is decided by the local government (including as a member of a committee, for example);
   e) ensuring that the local government promptly provides the Minister with the information about the local government area, or the local government, that is requested by the Minister;
   f) being a member of each standing committee of the local government;
   g) representing the local government at ceremonial or civic functions.
5) A councillor who is not the mayor may perform the mayor's extra responsibilities only if the mayor delegates the responsibility to the councillor.
6) When performing a responsibility, a councillor must serve the overall public interest of the whole local government area.

5.1.3 Employees

Under Section 13 of the Act, Council employees are responsible for:

13 Responsibilities of local government employees
1) All employees of a local government have the same responsibilities, but the chief executive officer has some extra responsibilities.
2) All employees have the following responsibilities—
   a) implementing the policies and priorities of the local government in a way that promotes—
      i.   the effective, efficient and economical management of public resources; and
      ii. excellence in service delivery; and
      iii. continual improvement;
   b) carrying out their duties in a way that ensures the local government—
      i.   discharges its responsibilities under this Act; and
      ii. complies with all laws that apply to local governments; and
      iii. achieves its corporate plan;
   c) providing sound and impartial advice to the local government;
   d) carrying out their duties impartially and with integrity;
   e) ensuring the employee's personal conduct does not reflect adversely on the reputation of the local government;
   f) improving all aspects of the employee's work performance;
   g) observing all laws relating to their employment;
   h) observing the ethics principles under the Public Sector Ethics Act 1994, section 4;
   i) complying with a code of conduct under the Public Sector Ethics Act 1994.

5.1.4 Chief Executive Officer

In additional to the responsibilities of all employees

3) The chief executive officer has the following extra responsibilities—
   a) managing the local government in a way that promotes—
      i.   the effective, efficient and economical management of public resources; and
      ii. excellence in service delivery; and
      iii. continual improvement;
   b) managing the other local government employees through management practices that—
      i.   promote equal employment opportunities; and
      ii. are responsive to the local government's policies and priorities;
   c) establishing and implementing goals and practices in accordance with the policies and priorities of the local government;
   d) establishing and implementing practices about access and equity to ensure that members of the community have access to—
      i.   local government programs; and
      ii. appropriate avenues for reviewing local government decisions;
   e) the safe custody of—
      i.   all records about the proceedings, accounts or transactions of the local government or its committees; and
      ii. all documents owned or held by the local government;

f) complying with requests from councillors under section 170A—
    i. for advice to assist the councillor carry out his or her role as a councillor; or
    ii. for information, that the local government has access to, relating to the local government.

5.2 Review and Control Measures

5.2.1 Staff Code of Conduct

All employees of Council must seek to achieve the highest standards of behaviour when dealing with customers and each other and must encourage a culture where ethical conduct is recognised, valued, and followed at all levels and ensure appropriate action is taken to prevent fraud and corruption.

Council has developed a Code of Conduct for staff which is based on the principles of the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*. Staff are introduced to the Code of Conduct at the point of induction and review and its content on a scheduled basis via Council's policy review system.

The Staff Code of Conduct is available for inspection via Council's website https://www.carpentaria.qld.gov.au/homepage/51/carpentaria-shire-council-policies

5.2.2 Complaints Management System

Council has complaints management policies and procedures which ensures an effective, transparent, and timely method of responding to complaints regarding Council's services, administrative actions, competitive neutrality, the conduct and performance of Councillors or staff behaviour. To facilitate the effective management of complaints, Council has committed to:

- maintaining policies and procedures and ensuring that training is provided to staff;
- ensuring that potential complainants are aware of the avenues available to lodge a complaint with Council;
- providing an environment of continuous improvement through reporting and customer feedback.

The Administrative Action Complaints Policy and Procedure is available for inspection via Council's website https://www.carpentaria.qld.gov.au/homepage/48/complaints-process

5.2.3 Fraud and Corruption

Council adopted the Fraud and Corruption Prevention Policy at the Ordinary General Meeting held on 15th June 2022. The policy defines Carpentaria Shire Council's position in relation to fraud and corruption.

Council acknowledges that the Fraud and Corruption Policy and accompanying Fraud Control Plan are in place and address the ten elements of effective fraud control, identified in the Crime and Corruption Commission's publication, Fraud and Corruption Controls: Guidelines for Best Practice (2005).

5.2.4 Confidentiality

Council employees and Councillors will have access to confidential information in the course of their duties. Council is committed to preserving the confidentiality of information held by it in accordance with its Handling of Confidential Documents Directive. Councillors and staff must not access Council information except to the extent that is necessary for them to perform their official duties.

There are several laws which require Council to make available information to members of the public or government bodies. Council will fully comply with its obligations under those laws.

Details about Right to Information and Information Privacy can be found in Section 4.4.3.

5.2.5 Contact with Lobbyists

As governed by the *Integrity Act 2009*, Council maintains a Register of Contacts with Lobbyists.

This Register is accessible via Queensland Integrity Commissioner's website.

5.2.6 Councillors requests for advice and information

Council has guidelines for Councillor Interaction with staff in relation to the provision and exchange of information and advice. The Advice Guidelines – Requests by Councillors for Advice or Information ensure that requests for information comply with the intent and purpose of the principles of the *Local Government Act 2009*.

Staff are to provide reasonable assistance to Councillors in the exercise of their role and the performance of their duties. Interaction must be carried out in a professional manner at all times with respect and regard for Councillor and staff positions.

5.2.7 Councillors Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interests must be declared by Councillors at Council meetings and recorded in the minutes if a matter to be discussed at that meeting could be perceived to result in a personal gain. To ensure transparency, accountability and integrity as a councillor, councillors must manage Conflicts of Interest (COI) between the Councillors interest and the interests of any related persons.

Guides have been produced by the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning to assist Councillors to manage any Prescribed COIs or Declarable COIs. A Prescribed COI is a specific, clear list of situations where legislation states that a councillor must not participate in decisions. A declarable COI is a situation where a councillor might have a conflict of interest, and they must declare the interest, and then either they choose to leave the meeting themselves or other councillors vote to decide whether they can participate in a decision.

5.2.8 Audit Committee

Council does not have a separate established Audit Committee in accordance with Section 208 – 211 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* and Section 105 of the *Local Government Act 2009*. The Audit Committee comprises the full council and the senior executives to work together to fulfil specific governance responsibilities that contribute to the improved performance of the organisation.

It plays a key role in assisting Council to fulfil its governance and oversight responsibilities in relation to several areas including, financial reporting, internal control systems, risk management, legal and regulatory compliance, and audit functions.

5.2.9 External Audit

Each year, the Queensland Audit Office, or contractors appointed on their behalf, audit Council's financial statements and provide an independent audit report to Council. Any significant issues the Queensland Audit Office identifies are made public through the Auditor General's Reports to Parliament.

The audit report identifies financial and compliance issues and categorises them into high, medium, and low risks. These risks are reviewed and addressed by Council's management via the coordination and stewardship of the Finance and Corporate Governance departments. In addition to financial and compliance audits, the Queensland Audit Office carries out performance management system audits and information systems audits.

5.2.10 Internal Audit

Council has established an Internal Audit function in accordance with Section 207 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* and Section 105 of the *Local Government Act 2009*. The Internal Audit function is an independent and objective review and advisory service, established within Council to provide assurance to the Audit Committee and management that Council's controls are designed to manage Council's risks and achieve objectives by operating in an efficient, effective, and ethical manner.

The primary objectives of the Internal Audit Unit are to evaluate Council's systems of internal control in order to provide assurance that:

- Council is achieving its goals and objectives efficiently, effectively and in an ethical manner
- financial and operating information produced is accurate, timely and complete

there is compliance with relevant laws, regulations, and other external requirements and with Council policies, directives and other internal requirement Council's assets and liabilities are competently managed and protected against loss or other negative consequences.